

KEA

Where can you find the kea?

They nest in the beech forests at sea level on the West Coast of the South Island, in the mountain forests along the Southern Alps (as far north as Kahurangi).

The habitat of the kea extends from South Island beech forests to alpine meadows and mountain scree slopes.

Wild kea exist only in the South Island of New Zealand in and around the alpine areas.

What does the kea look like?

Kea are an endemic parrot of the South Island's high country.

Keas are the most intelligent birds in the world.

The kea is a parrot and like all parrots it has 4 toes on each foot - two that point forward and two that point backward.

How did the kea become endangered?

When people cut down the trees, Human development in the alpine zone has reduced the sources of natural foods available to kea. No wonder they find our fat-laden human foods so inviting! However, human foods encourage kea to come into closer contact

Keas are **scared** of dogs, cats, stoats and possums.



What can we do to help the kea?

In captivity, the bird is fond of butter, nuts, apples, carrots, grapes, mangoes, figs, bread, dairy products, ground meat, and pasta.

Although kea are seen in reasonable numbers throughout the South Island, the size of the wild population is unknown - but is estimated at between 1,000 and 5,000 birds.



People are helping the kea to survive so that they don't become extinct.



What does the kea eat?

The Kea also takes advantage of human garbage and "gifts" of food.

It has been observed breaking open nests to feed on the chicks after hearing the chicks in their nests.

The Kea feeds on more than 40 plant species, beetle larva, other birds (including shearwater chicks), and mammals (including sheep and rabbits).

